



LIBRARY BOARD MINUTES

June 9, 2010

BOARD PRESENT: Brodsky, Bryant, Chiles, Dickerson, Grey-McKenzie, Howard, Kim, Lewis, J., Lewis, O., Neuman, Riccardi, Sheriff-Merchant

STAFF PRESENT: Parker Hamilton, Director; Regina Holyfield-Jewett, Recording Secretary

GUEST: Aileen Klein, Friends of the Library

The Library Achievement Awards (LAC) were held from 7:00 – 8:00 p.m.

The LAC Membership Award was presented to Olney Library Advisory Committee for demonstrating effective membership recruitment and retention methods.

The Eleanor Ablard Award was presented to Damascus Library Advisory Committee for having the most effective program linking the LAC, the library and its users.

The LAC Member of the Year Award was presented to Mr. Carl Brandt for his outstanding work during the year.

The Long Branch Library Advisory Committee was also presented an award in honor of Mr. Brandt's accomplishments.

The Library Board meeting was convened by Chair Brodsky at 8:02 p.m.

APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES:

Minutes from the May 12, 2010 meeting were approved.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Items added to the agenda:

- The Futurist Committee
- Candidate Forums
- Status of the LAC Handbook
- Forums being offered by the University of Maryland
- LAC application approvals

DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

Sue Merewitz sent the Board members links to library related news articles. Tomorrow members will receive from Director Hamilton copies of: 1) a draft of a letter that will be sent to staff regarding the FY11 Approved Budget; 2) requests that were submitted to the Friends of the Library along with the grant reports; 3) the press release that was sent out regarding the summer reading program; 4) and the letter that was sent to book discussion groups regarding the new program structure that will be effective December 31, 2010. This is **information Board members can share** as they meet with their LACs.

MCPL is below capacity in staff; we want to fully **support the Board**. We can only do this if the Board members are responsive to our emails. One of the reasons Libraries advocated for not having an annual meeting was that there was not sufficient staff to do the work. The LAC awards event took just as much time due to unresponsiveness. Staff time is taken from other work when they have to continuously check emails and send follow-up emails. Board members' help with this would be appreciated.

A request was sent to Mr. Leggett to extend the current **Strategic Plan**. After looking at the feedback and the outcome of the Library Summit, it was determined that they really meshed very nicely with the existing Strategic Plan. Mr. Leggett was asked if this plan could be extended for two more years with some additional goals and objectives rather than writing a new plan, and he agreed. The current Strategic Plan will be extended.

In the Strategic plan under Readiness for the Future, one of the items that needs to be worked on, and which the Board is asked to consider helping to take on, is seeking **diversified funding sources**. In order to do that, and get in a mindset that MCPL's budget woes are going to be an everyday occurrence that will have to be dealt with for the next two years, Director Hamilton proposed a **half day event** of the Library Board and Library Senior Staff to take place this summer.

This event can be used as an opportunity to take a look at the Strategic Plan and talk specifically about the future of libraries. How do we move forward as a library system with the current funding? If no additional funding is received from the County, what sources of diversified funding can we propose and how do we go about doing that? There is a future for the library system and it requires funding. How do we go about having that discussion and how do we get in a planning mode so that we are ready, so that we act and not react? How can we be proactive as we move forward?

Chair Brodsky asked the Board members to consider selecting a weekend day since it is a half-day event and offered to host the event at his home. The members were asked to send their summer availabilities for Saturdays via email to Chair Brodsky. Library senior staff availabilities will also be requested.

Jill Lewis reported that a summit sponsored by Maryland Advisory Council on Libraries (MACL) is being held this summer by the State Library's Advisory Council, *Planning for the Future of Libraries*. Information and ideas from this summit can be brought to the half-day event.

Different library systems have different legal statuses – some are independent with their own budgets. Before the half-day summer session, Director Hamilton will check with the County Attorney to see what authority, if any, MCPL has to raise money so that there will be perimeters for the discussion and set framing for what is possible.

Question: Will this be considered an official Library Board meeting if more than seven members show up for the event this summer? If so, will it have to be announced to the public?

Answer: Yes. After an official date has been scheduled, a notice will be posted for the public.

New hours will become effective July 6; Sunday hours will begin late summer probably around August 15. The core hours need to be staffed first.

There have been some difficulties with the **Gaithersburg interim site**. There is a great deal of back and forth between the attorneys regarding the lease. The County Attorney is going to get involved to see if he can facilitate getting the lease signed.

The **Talking Books** program ended June 1. A number of letters have been received regarding the program; the customers have been directed to contact the State Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped. There has been some positive feedback. Talking points, which have been very helpful, were developed for all MCPL staff. Jill Lewis reported that there has been some confusion especially with older customers who do not understand the letters even though the letters were very clear. It has gone very well overall. The DRC LAC has created flyers to help get the information out (sample flyers were circulated).

Jeanie Dunnington, Chair of the DRC LAC, asked Jill Lewis to bring before the Library Board the prospect of changing the name of the **DRC LAC**. They feel that the name "Disability Resource Center" is limiting. The DRC LAC will be asked to brainstorm and submit their ideas.

Ms. Dunnington also wanted to know if people can belong to two LACs. For example, if someone lived near Davis and wanted to belong to the Davis LAC as well as the DRC LAC. This will be researched.

There will be a new feature on Libraries' website as a way to get more information out to the public regarding what is happening in Libraries, the **Director's Report**. It will be unveiled next week. This report will be a monthly feature and include hyperlinks to different services and programs.

On Saturday, the **Noyes Children's Library Foundation** is having its first major fundraiser – it is a parade that will begin at 10:15 a.m. County Executive Leggett, Director Hamilton, former head of Noyes Library and a number of children's authors will participate.

The Department is in the process of **transferring staff**. All transfers should be complete by July 6. There is a lot of anxiety in the Department. The branch managers are doing a wonderful job in helping outgoing and incoming staff during this transition.

The **renaming ceremony** for the Rockville Library was held on May 28; it was an emotional ceremony. Board members Otto Lewis and Frank Riccardi attended. Friends of the Library, Rockville Chapter, hosted the reception. There was a wonderful mix of attendees. It was challenging to bring in military protocol with County protocol and be respectful of the families and the community. Director Hamilton thanked her husband, who is a colonel, for his guidance regarding military protocol.

The Rockville City Council is now requiring customers to pay for **parking** on Saturdays effective July 1. The cost is one dollar per day.

Twelve Library employees went out on the Retirement Incentive Program; eleven employees went out on Discontinued Service Retirement; and a number of employees will be transferring to other County departments.

Question: There was an article referring to the reorganization of County government, will this include Libraries?

Answer: There is going to be a joint taskforce of the executive and legislative branch that will include six members appointed by the County Executive and six members appointed by the Council. This taskforce will be looking at how County government is organized and making recommendations as to how it can be restructured. This is a way for the County Executive and Council to find redundancies in services. We are not sure how this might impact Libraries.

NEW BUSINESS

Expiration of Board Members' Terms

There are four Board members whose terms will expire in September and are eligible to apply for reappointment: David Chiles, Althea Grey-McKenzie, Kay Kim and Lois Neuman. All were invited to reapply.

Candidates Forums

Lois Neuman attended Councilmember Leventhal's forum last night and encouraged all Board members to attend the forums/conversations held by the council candidates. She recommended that a library representative be at all events and that notices be sent to all LACs, FOLMC and the local Friends chapters regarding the events. Questions should be asked of all candidates about where they stand in regards to public libraries. This information should be shared with all.

Discussion was held regarding what questions to ask of councilmembers and candidates and what the Board can do with the information garnered from these conversations. Why are libraries seen as low hanging fruit? It was agreed that meetings with councilmembers should take place year round. Board members will share information regarding upcoming forums, voting records and the reconciliation list with all LAC members via email. Board members will research the legal framework regarding MCPL raising funds and partnering with businesses.

LAC Handbook

Chair Brodsky reviewed the handbook and changed every reference to advocacy and submitted the revised handbook to Connie Latham, Special Assistant to the County Executive. To date, no communication has been received from Ms. Latham; Chair Brodsky will send an email to her. If a timely response is not received, the handbook will be sent out to the LACs.

The Futuristic Committee

The Committee is looking at the part of the glass that is half full; looking at other configurations of libraries and how they are doing their funding; and alternative funding sources. With the Board's approval, the Committee would like to present their findings at a future meeting. The Committee is also following up on the Summit. They have taken the comments that came in and the information from the breakout sessions and put it with the Strategic Plan. This information is on the website. The Committee has been in touch with the over two hundred participants from the Summit and will be in contact with the other six hundred who were invited.

Forum

The University of Maryland has suggested another forum, *America's Role in the World: What Does National Security Mean in the 21st Century?* The Olney, Praisner and Twinbrook LACs will be asked if they are interested in hosting this event. If so, they are asked to contact Otto Lewis and their respective Friends chapters. If these forums are conducted at the branches, MCPL staff cannot be involved at all

because the Department does not have the staffing capacity. The only role of the Library Board is to share the information with their LACs.

Thank yous

The Board thanked the administrative staff for doing a phenomenal job this past year. The staff were presented plants as a token of appreciation.

Great job to everyone for their assistance with the awards ceremony - the Awards Committee, Parker Hamilton, and Regina Holyfield-Jewett.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

None

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 9:05 p.m.

B. Parker Hamilton, Director